



Arkansas Martin Luther King, Jr. Commission, Community Partners to Host Several Nonviolence Youth Summit Activities in Pine Bluff

The Arkansas Martin Luther King, Jr. Commission and community partners will host several Nonviolence Youth Summit activities on Sept. 28-30 in Pine Bluff.

An opening session will begin at 9 a.m. Sept. 28 at the Pine Bluff High School Gymnasium, 711 W. 11th Ave., Pine Bluff. During the session, Arkansas Department of Education Secretary Jacob Oliva will announce the winners of the Pine Bluff High School "I Have a Dream" Youth Essay Contest. A ribbon-cutting ceremony with the Pine Bluff Regional Chamber of Commerce to promote economic development, community service, and a partnership with the city will occur at the end of the 9 a.m. session. Educational sessions for youth that promote mental health, financial literacy, and nonviolence will follow.

At noon, the program will feature actor Carl Anthony Payne II as the keynote speaker. Special performances will include Famous Amos, a social media influencer, Romeo Miller, an entertainer, and Melvin Williams, a gospel artist. A youth-led "Our Beloved Community" Task Force also will promote anti-bullying and initiatives to curb violence.

Additional events are listed below.

- Stop the Violence Takeover event – 10:30 a.m. Sept. 28 at the Robert F. Morehead Middle School, 2601 Fluker St., Pine Bluff. Celebrity speakers will encourage students to embrace nonviolence and play in celebrity basketball games.
- Arkansas Martin Luther King, Jr. Commission Community Peace Walk – 2 p.m. Sept. 28 at the Pine Bluff High School Gymnasium
- Chess and Family hosted by the CPR Chess Club – 5 p.m. Sept. 28 at the Trinity Learning Center, 2900 W. Sixth St., Pine Bluff
- Stop the Violence Youth Explosion and Gospel Extravaganza – 6 p.m. Sept. 28 at St. Luke AME Church, 9908 Princeton Pike, Pine Bluff
- Stop the Violence Takeover event – 1 p.m. Sept. 29 at the Watson Chapel High School, 4000 Camden Road, Pine Bluff. Celebrity speakers will encourage students to embrace nonviolence.
- The Life and Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and A Celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. through the Arts – 4:30 p.m. Sept. 29, hosted by TOPPS at 1000 Townsend Drive, Pine Bluff
- Community block party and food giveaway hosted by First Ward Living Grace Pantry and TMP Amici Aeternum, both non-profit organizations – 5 p.m. Sept. 30 at Christ the Redeemer Church, 3820 W. 20th Ave., Pine Bluff

“Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, ‘We cannot walk alone,’” Arkansas Martin Luther King, Jr. Commission Executive Director DuShun Scarbrough said. “The commission’s goal with these activities is to promote community support, collaboration, and engagement in an effort to curb violence. The work is not easy, but we are moving in the right direction. We also are partnering with the Pine Bluff School District to address excessive tardiness and absenteeism and establish an HBCU college-bound program to increase students’ knowledge of post-secondary education options.”

To promote the importance of attending school, Miller recorded a message that will be shared with students.

Program partners include GVI, Clearwater Paper, the Pine Bluff School District, Walmart, Power 92 Jams, KOKY, and the Praise Network. All events are free and open to the public.

About the Arkansas Martin Luther King, Jr. Commission

The mission of the Arkansas Martin Luther King, Jr. Commission, a division of the Arkansas Department of Education, is to promote and preserve the life and legacy of Dr. King in Arkansas. The commission is guided by Dr. King’s mission and philosophy of love, tolerance, and nonviolence and strives for social improvement in Arkansas, helping communities and organizations achieve new leadership and public service levels. To learn more about the commission, visit <https://arkingdream.org/>.